Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 05816 140857Z
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NRC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SOE-02
AID-05 CEA-01 COME-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10
INT-05 L-03 OMB-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 STR-07
TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /115 W
----------008052 140903Z /23
O R 140727Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 907
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCOOSNQ MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 5816

FOLLOWING RECD FROM BOMBAY DATED APRIL 13, 1978 BEING
RPTD TO YOU.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 0929

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: TECH, IN
SUBJ: NUCLEAR AFFAIRS TALK WITH SETHNA

1. ON APRIL 12, SETHNA MET WITH VISITING EMBASSY DCM BLOOD AND DEPARTMENTAL INDIA DESK OFFICER THIBAULT, WHO WERE ACCOMPANIED BY CONGEN. MOST OF TIME WAS SPENT REVIEWING FAMILIAR POLICY DIFFERENCES AND POSITIONS, BUT FOLLOWING POINTS WERE WORTH NOTING: A) SETHNA INDICATED THAT GOI IS CLOSELY STUDYING CONDITIONS WHICH MIGHT DEVELOP AND WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE AN ABROGATION OF ONE OR MORE OF THE THREE AGREEMENTS COVERING U.S. SUPPORT FOR TARAPUR (AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION OF 1963; FUEL SUPPLY CONTRACT, AND AID LOAN AGREEMENT). IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE IN MIND ANY POINT OR ACTION THAT WOULD DEFINITELY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 05816 140857Z

CONSTITUTE AN ABROGATION. I STILL SEEMS TO BE FIRM INDIAN POLICY TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT TAINT THEIR RECORD OF SCRUPULOUSLY LIVING UP T TERMS OF THE AGREEMENTS. SETHNA IS CONCERNED OVER THE PRESSURES IN THE INDIAN PRESS AND PARLIAMENT FOR REPROCESSING AND INSISTED THAT U.S. HAS OBLIGATION TO REPLY TO IAEC LETTERS OF AUGUST 21, 1976, AND DECEMBER 24, 1976 (BOMBAY 2277, AUGUST 26, 1976, RELAYED TO DEPT. AS NEW DELHI

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

12609), REQUESTING A JOINT DETERMINATION. WE MADE QUITE CLEAR
THAT ON MANY OCCASIONS, PARTICULARLY DURING DEPUTY UNDER
SECRETARY NYE'S VISIT OF LAST AUGUST, THAT HIGH U.S. OFFICIALS
HAVE TOLD GOI THAT THERE IS NO PROSPECT OF U.S. AGREEMENT TO
REPROCESSING. NEVERTHELESS, HE PERSISTED IN HIS VIEW THAT U.S.
HAS OBLIGATION OF ADDRESSING THIS MATTER DIRECTLY BY REPLYING
TO IAEC'S INQUIRIES.
B) SETHNA WAS NOT INCLINED TO GIVE ANY PRECISE REASONS FOR
IAEC RESISTANCE TO FULLSCOPE SAFEGUARDS. SEVERAL TIMES DURING
CONVERSATION HE REPEATED THAT IEAC DOES NOT WANT "SOMEONE
LOOKING OVER THEIR SHOULDERS" UNDER DIECRIMINATORY INSPECTION
SYSTEM. HOWEVER, ON A COUPLE OF OCCASIONS HE SAID THAT U.S.
NONPROLIFERATION ACT IN EFFECT FORBIDS THE PRODUCTION OR
RETENTION OF PLUTONIUM. HE ADMITTED THAT THIS POINT WAS
FUNDAMENTAL TO THE WIDELY HELD VIEW AMONG IAEC SCIENTISTS
THAT FULLSCOPE SAFEGUARDS ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A FAST BREEDER, WHICH IS CENTRAL TO INDIA'S
NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM. HOWEVER, TO BACK UP THIS CONTENTION SETHNA
WOULD NOT GO BEYOND STATING THAT ONE HAS TO READ BETWEEN THE LINES
OF THE ACT TO REACH THE CONCLUSION THAT THE U.S. WILL NOT AGREE
TO NATIONAL PLUTONIUM PROCESSING. OTHER CONTACTS HAVE TOLD
THE CONGEN THAT SETHNA HAS DEFENDED THIS INTERPRETATION ON THE
BASIS OF SECTION 129 (1) D OF NON PROFLIFERATION ACT WHICH READS:
"NO NUCLEAR MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT OR SENSITIVE NUCLEAR TEC-
NOLOGY SHALL BE EXPORTED TO ANY NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE THAT IS
FOUND BY PRESIDENT TO HAVE AT ANY TIME AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 05816 140857Z

OF THIS SECTION, ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES INVOLVING SOURCE OF
SPECIAL NUCLEAR MATERIAL AND HAVING DIRECT SIGNFICANCE FOR THE
MANUFACTURE OR ACQUISITION OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVISES...".
APPARENTLY INDIANS FEAR THIS PROVISION COULD BE DIRECTED AGAINST
THEIR PLAN FOR NATIONAL PRODUCTION OF PLUTONIUM (FROM HEAVY
WATER REACTORS, NOT TARAPUR).
C) SETHAN TOLD US THAT SHAH NOW ADMITS ERROR IN ESTIMATING
RE-RACKING COST OF TARAPUR POOLS AT $3 MILLION. SETHNA AGREED
THAT THIS TASK CAN BE DONE FOR UNDER $1 MILLION. HOWEVER,
SETHNA SAID THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND TO CORRECT THE RECORD
IMMEDIATELY AS THIS MATTER IS NOT NOW OPERATIONAL. (BOMBAY
661, MARCT 15 REPEATED TO DEPARTMENT AS NEW DELHI 4167).
D) FOR FIRST TIME IN CONVERSATION WITH U.S. OFFICIALS SETHNA WAS
DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF BARC DIRECTOR RAMANNA. HE SAID THAT THERE
WOULD BE NO TROUBLE IN CHOOSING A REPLACEMENT AS THERE ARE MANY
QUALIFIED PEOPLE. HE DISMISSED IDEA THAT REPLACEMENT HAD TO BE
A SCIENTIST OF RAMANNA'S CALIBER. SETHNA NAMED A LARGE NUMBER
OF GOI OFFICIALS WHO HAD COME UP THROUGH THE RANKS OF THE IAEC
AND MOVED ON TO OTHER TOP POSITIONS IN INDIA, E.G. PRASAD OF ONGC.
HE ADDED THAT REPLACEMENT WILL BE SELECTED ON BASIS HIS RECOMMEND-
ATION. IN DENIGATING RAMANNA SETHNA REMARKED THAT LATTER AT LEAST
HAD SKILL TO ORGANIZE 50 OF HIS RELATIVES TO WAGE A LETTER-

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

WRITING CAMPAGIN ON HIS BEHALF.
E) SETHNA SAID THAT IN VIEW OF OUR INTEREST IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO VIET NAM WE WOULD PROBABLY LIKE TO KNOW THAT THE VIET-NAMESE HAD NOT FOLLOWED UP ON INDIA'S OFFER OF THREE OR FOUR TRAINING SLOTS. SETHNA INSISTED THAT VIET NAM AS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF IAEA'S SOUTH ASIA GROUPING HAD RIGHT TO SEEK THIS TRAINING AND INDIA WOULD BE HARD PUT TO REFUSE IT, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF PREVIOUS SUPER-POWER HELP TO VIET NAM IN NUCLEAR AREA. HE SAID THAT IF VIETNAM PURSUED TRAINING OFFER IT WOULD BE IN NON-SENSITIVE AREAS PREVIOUSLY OUTLINED AND WOULD BE TAILORED TO VIET NAM NEEDS RATHER THAN SIMPLY SLOTS IN CONTINUING TRAINING PROGRAMS.
F) SETHNA CLOSED BY SAYING THAT HE SUPPOSED THAT THE 7.6 TONS OF URANIUM WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAD PROMISED WOULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 NEW DE 05816 140857Z

BE SHIPPED BUT HE WAS NOT AT ALL HOPEFUL OF ANYTHING BEYOND THAT. HE SAID THAT THE CONTINUING DELAY IN THE PRESENT SHIPMENT HAS CAUSED A LOT OF PROBLEMS WITH THE PRESS AND THE PARLIAMENT; ONLY MORARJI'S SKILL AND TOUGH WAY OF HANDLING PARLIAMENTARIANS HAS PREVENTED EVEN FURTHER CLAMOR ON NEW DELHI. COURTNEY UNQUOTE
GOHEEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR ENERGY, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NEWDE05816
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780160-0652
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780457/aaaabwll.tel
Line Count: 142
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 714da1b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2969374
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NUCLEAR AFFAIRS TALK WITH SETHNA
TAGS: TECH, IN, (SETHNA, HOMI N)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/714da1b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014